

43
The Curbed Sinner.

A DISCOURSE

Upon the *Gracious and Wondrous*

Restraints

Laid by the

PROVIDENCE

Of the Glorious GOD,

On the Sinful Children of Men, to
*Withhold them from Sinning against
Him.*

Occasioned by a Sentence of DEATH,
passed on a poor YOUNG MAN,
for the *Murder* of his Companion.
With some Historical Passages refer-
ring to that Unhappy Spectacle.

By *Cotton Mather*, D. D.

Job XXXVII. 14.

*Hearken to this ;--Stand still, and Con-
sider the Wondrous Works of God.*

*Boston, N. E. Printed by John Allen,
for Nicholas Boone, at the Sign of
the BIBLE in Cornhil. 1713.*

The Cursed Sinner.

A DISCOURSE

Upon the Gracious and Wondrous

Refrains

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PROVIDENCE

Of the Glorious GOD,

On the Sinful Children of Man, to
Withhold them from Sinning against
Him.

Occasioned by the presence of DEATH,
passed on a YOUNG MAN,
for the loss of his Companion.
With some Historical Passages refer-
ring to that Unhappy spectacle.

By Cotton Mather, D. D.

Job XXXVII. 14.

Heaven to the Lord, and Earth
under the Word of the Lord.

Printed by John Allen,
for Nicholas Boone, at the sign of
the BIBLE in Cornhill. 1713.

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*The Unhappy Circumstances of a
Young Man, whose Name was Da-
vid Wallis, give the Occasion for
this Publication.*

THIS Young man was born
at Preston-Pans near Edinbo-
rough, and had such a Re-
ligious Education, as is
more frequent there, than
in many other Places.
When he was about Four-
teen Years of Age, he broke away to a Sea-
faring Life, in which he very much Lost the
Good Impressions of his Earlier Minority.

On Saturday, 1. d. 6. m. 1713. between
the hours of nine and ten at night, going on
board the Ship *Unity* to which he belonged,
(then in *Boston Harbour*,) and having been
all the Day without any *Meat*, (it had been
well perhaps, if without any *Drink* also!)
he was angry because *Benjamin Stolwood* had
not dress'd the Kettle.

Benjamin Stolwood, was at this time acting
in the place of a Cook for the Ship, and be-
ing ask'd, readily gave a good piece of raw
Beef to them that came a board. *Wallis*
(having his Knife in his hand to cut the

Meat into slices) ask'd him, *Why he had got no Viſuals for him?* Stolwood made a proper and moſt Answer; but ſuch as Wallis was not pleas'd withal: For he laid aſide his Knife, and ſtruck Stolwood divers blows with his Hand; and bid him, *Be gone out of the Cook Room.* Stolwood returned nothing but a Gentle Answer; intimating, That he would forgive him, on the ſcore of his being a *Little in his Aires.* Hereupon (as was De- poſed by one of the Witneſſes,) Wallis told him, *If he would not be gone, he would Stick him with his Knife.* And then immediately ſtruck his Knife at his open Breſt (as is de- poſed by two more,) before the Lad could well make any Eſcape; he ſtanding with his Back againſt the Bulk-head; the Knife entred under his Left ſhoulder, with ſuch a mortal ſtroke, that the poor Boy cried out, *I am kill'd;* and removing his hand from the Wound, which at firſt he ſtopped with it, the Blood plentifully gush'd out; his Countenance chang'd, and in a few minutes he died. One of the Witneſſes hereupon telling Wallis, That he had killed Stolwood, he only answered, *If I have, I muſt answer for it.* Next day, the Co- roner's Inqueſt Charg'd Wallis with the Mur- der of Stolwood.

He was Tried at a *Special Court of Affize,* Held at *Boston,* on Wednesday the *Twenty Sixth of Auguſt;* When the Jury found him *Guilty,* and to Sentence of Death was paſſed upon him. The Judges, with the Jury, be- ſtow'd a moſt ſerious Conſideration upon the

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the matter. The Law of our own Province is, *Death for whosoever shall commit Wilful Murder upon Premeditated Malice or Hatred.* They considered, that the Threatning, *I will stick you with my knife*, uttered before the stroke, was a sufficient Expression of Premeditation. When Passion proceeds to Killing with a Tool adapted for the purpose, it cannot but suppose a criminal Premeditation of mischief. And the Threatning does yet more Evidently Proclaime it. It was considered, That it would be a miserable case, if our Lives might Ly at the Mercy of every Murderer, concerning whom it cannot be proved, that he had some days before declared his Intention to commit his Villany. They considered how far also the Nature of a Fact will make it Legally pass for Wilful; and how far the Quality of an Instrument, with which a stroke is intended at another, will make it pass in the Law both of God and Man for a Wilful Murder. They considered, the Divine Direction; Num. XXXV. 16. *If he smite him with an Instrument of Iron, so that he Die, he is a Murderer; the Murderer shall surely be put to Death.* And they considered, the Direction of the Statute, of Jac. I. Which Expressly says, 'To the End that Stabbing and Killing Men on the sudden, by wicked Persons in the Time of their Rage, Drunkenness, or Displeasure, or other passion of mind, contrary to the Commandment of Almighty God, may be restrained; Be it Enacted That every Person who shall Stab any Person, that has not

then any Weapon drawn, &c. So as the Person so Stabbed or Thrust shall thereof Dye within the space of six Months then next following, altho' it cannot be proved, that the same was done of Malice Forethought, yet the party so offending, shall suffer Death. They considered, That besides the Direction to be fetch'd by Christian Nations, from the Judicial Laws of Moses, concerning what is to be Esteemed a Capital Murder, Long before those Laws, there was an ancient Law of God, given unto Mankind Gen. IX. 6. *Whoso sheds Mans Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed; for in the Image of God, made he Man: A Law Anterior and Superiour to all Humane Laws, and forever & every where in Force, whatever may be the Humane Laws.* And so the Sentence proceeded.

The Honourable Judges, that they might Extend all possible Clemency to him, fixed not the Time of his Execution until the *Twenty fourth of September.* In this Time, His Excellency the Governour had some occasion to consider, how far it might be proper to propose the Prisoner as an Object for the Queens Mercy. But upon the most Mature Deliberation with Persons of understanding, and as *Mercifully* disposed as any, but not for such Tender Mercies to some as would prove Cruelties to all, the Nature of the Crime appeared such, as to bring the Criminal within the Statute of *Heaven, Prov. XXVIII. 17. A man that doth Violence to the Blood*

of David Wallis.

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Blood of any Person, shall flee to the Pit, let no Man slay him.

The poor Young man, before as well as after his Trial, was in such a pensive Condition, as was agreeable to one under the Expectation of what was now coming upon him. And he Expressed himself unto this purpose, That he had sinned, and he deserved to suffer, and he expected it ; It belonged unto him ; and he should patiently submit unto it ; If he might but get into good Terms with Heaven before he died, this was all that he had to be concerned about.

In this Time, the Ministers of the Town, with all suitable Compassion and Assiduity, Visited him, and Instructed him, and Pray'd with him ; and not only used more private Endeavours to prepare him for his Death, but also pursued the same Intention more publicly, when he had Liberty which was readily granted him, to attend in our publick Assemblies.

Under these Cultivations, he was brought unto such Thoughts and Frames, and he took his opportunities to declare such Things, as the Reader will find related in the Ensuing Sermon. He also declared, That he could not without wonder now Look back on a very odd thing in his former Life ; which was, That he had abundance of Times, when only sporting with the Young man, he had now Murdered, let fall these words to him, Ben, I shall one day be hang'd for thee ; God forgive me for saying so ! He could give no Account of the Impression ; but now found himself

A Narrative

himself Extremely astonished in the Accomplishment.

The *Twenty fourth* day of *September* arrived, when the poor Young man, having been first instructed with a most Pertinent and Excellent Sermon, on *Psal. LXXIV. Deliver me from Blood guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my Salvation*; was between the Hours of Two and Four in the Afternoon, carried unto his Execution.

A Minister of the Town, so far gratified the Importunity of his desire for it, as to accompany him, for his Assistance in these last Minutes of his Life.

The Young man Express'd all the pious and proper Frames, that his best Friends could have wish'd for him; and such as I hope, were a good Harvest, of the Pains and Prayers and Tears, wherewith Good men had been Labouring for his Welfare.

I will single out only Two or Three Passages, of what occur'd in the Conversation, (which could not be much) by the way.

The Minister asking him; *With what Frame of mind, poor David, with what Frame, dost thou Entertain this grievous Afternoon?* He answered; *I Bless the Lord, I find my Soul full of Submission to the will of God.*

Another time, the Minister asking him, *Child, what shal be Reported unto your poor Father, if the grievous Tidings of this Afternoon must be sent unto him?* He answered; *Let him know, that I Dye full of Hope of the Mercy of God unto my Soul.*

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Another time, the Minister asking him, *Is not the Terror of the Death just now before you, too hard for you?* He answered, *No, not at all; my Hope in the Mercy of God, has overcome it.*

He also declared, *That his Hope was founded in the Blood of his Great Saviour shed for him, & in the Wonderful Mercy of God, which allowed and invited the chief of Sinners, to plead this Blood, & the Wonderful Mercy of the Saviour, who will cast out none of those that come to him; And that the Effect of this Hope in him was, Hatred of all Sin more than ever, & a Desire to do all the good that was possible.*

He likewise declared, *That the nearer he drew to his End, the more he grew in his Hope.*

Arriving at the Fatal Place, when the Noises produced on such occasions in the vast confluence of People, were a little over, the Minister said unto him, *'The desire of a Dying Man has brought me, what perhaps nothing else would have done, to be present at this uneasy Spectacle. And now, David, you are come to those last Minutes, which must be employ'd unto the best Advantage. You have had set before you, the Nature and Desert of your Sins, and particularly of that Crime for which you are now to suffer; And the contrition of Soul, with which you are to acknowledge them. You have had the Tidings & the Tenders of an Admirable Saviour, who is Able and Willing to relieve you. You have been advised, how to Place your Faith in that Admirable Saviour, & then how to prove it in an*
Hatred

' Hatred of Sin, and a Zeal for the Service of
 ' God. What remains is, That you now Re-
 ' new your *Flight* unto your Saviour ; And,
 ' Oh ! What a *Lively Flight* in a *Dying Hour* !
 ' And that you testify to the People of God,
 ' who have so much desired it, the *Repentance*
 ' that God has given you. My poor *David*, I
 ' put thee over into those Gracious Hands, that
 ' will save thee to the uttermost. Oh ! May
 ' the Glorious Grace of God shine forth on
 ' this mournful occasion !

He then made a short Speech unto the Peo-
 ple, wherein he *Justifi'd* both God and Man
 in all that was come upon him ; and warn'd
 all the Spectators, to beware of ungovern'd
Passion. & *Sabbath-breaking*, & *Profane Swearing*,
 and *Hard Drinking*. and ever doing any thing
 that should be grievous to their *Parents*, which
 things, he said, had brought him to this.

Tho' what he spoke at all times, was usual-
 ly pertinent enough ; yet he was all along,
 one of but very few words. And so they
 were but few words, which he now uttered,
 and those not very audible. To supply this,
 he desired, That a paper, which he had given
 two days before unto the Minister, might be
 read ; which was done accordingly

Boston-Prison. 22. d. 7. m. 1713.

' **D**esiring to leave behind me some Ex-
 ' pressions of the *Thc'ts* with which I
 ' leave the World, I do first of all justify the
 ' *Sentence* which has Condemned me to Dye.
 ' Tho'

‘ Tho’ I had not Lodging in me a *Long Hatred* and *Malice* against the *Young man* whom I have *Murdered*, nor a *Long purpose* of *Killing* him ; yet my *Wicked Passion* was raised unto such an *Height* at the *Time* of the *Murder*, and I had so much *Intention* of mischief to him, tho’ it was but *sudden*, that I freely acknowledge, *I deserve to Dye for what I have done*. And I would Earnestly warn all *People*, to beware of giving way to their *Passion*, and *Rage*, when they are provoked. They see, by sad *Experience*, they know not what it may bring them to.

‘ I give Thanks to all that have Expressed their *good Will* to me in my sad Condition ; and particularly, to the *Honourable Judges*, who have given me so *Long a Time* to prepare for my *Death*, when I gave so *Little* to my poor *Brother*, to prepare for *his*.

‘ I would admire the *Providence* and *Compassion* of God unto me, for casting me into a *Place*, where I have enjoy’d such *Wonderful Means* and *Helps*, to carry on the work of *Repentance*. And I hope the Lord hath blessed *Endeavours* for my *Good*. I have some *Hope* of his *Pardoning Mercy*, and some *Hope* that the *Holy Spirit* of *Grace* hath Visited me in my *Prison*, and has drawn me to my *Saviour*. I have given up my self as well as I can, to my *only Saviour*, and begged that His *Blood* may *Cleanse* me from all my *Sin*, and that he would give me a *New Heart*, and bring me home unto God. I cast my self into his *Merciful Hands* ; and my *Hope*

of

A Narrative.

' of his Mercy Encourages me to do all I can
 ' for the Good of others. I would warn
 ' all people to beware of an *ungodly Life*;
 ' which I now find to be *more bitter than Death*.
 ' And I would warn *Young people* especially to
 ' beware of *Disobedience* to the *Instruction* of
 ' their *Parents*, and of doing any thing that
 ' may be *grievous* to their *Parents*. Nothing
 ' is now more *grievous* to me, than my not
 ' minding the *Word of God* & the *Calls* of the
 ' *Gospel* in my *Youth*. I wish that my Ex-
 ' ample may provoke *Young people* to come in-
 ' to such a *Life of Godliness*, as I would now
 ' give a thousand Worlds, that I had sooner-
 ' chosen.

' And Oh, the bitterness of Soul, with
 ' which I now wish, that I had never tramp-
 ' led on the Name of the Glorious God, by
 ' the *Profane Oaths*, which my wicked Mouth
 ' has uttered; and that I had never allowed
 ' my self in the *Dangerous Wickedness* of
 ' *Drunkennes*; and that I had never polluted
 ' my self with vile *Uncleanities*. For such
 ' things my poor Soul is wounded & bleeding
 ' to Death. And I cannot have Peace in my
 ' Soul, without warning and begging all the
 ' People, as they Love their own Souls, to be-
 ' ware of such *Iniquities*. Let them not go
 ' on in them, lest such miseries as they Little
 ' think of come upon them.

' And now, O my Saviour, the chief of Sinners,
 ' Leave

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of David Wallis.

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Leaves himself in thy Merciful Hands, for thy
great Salvation.

David Wallis.

Signed by David Wallis,
declaring every clause
of it to be from his
Heart, in the Presence
of us.

Seth Smith.

Robert Petton.

A Deputy Sheriff then demanded of him,
whether he owned this Instrument, & would have it
Look'd upon, as truly Expressing the sentiments of
his Heart. He replied, with a certain Air
of Alacrity, *Yes, with all my Heart!* Or, to
that Effect.

Hereupon the Minister proceeded unto
such a Prayer, as the occasion called for;
Wherein after the horrid Things done in
every Sin, were confessed and bewailed, the
Justice of the Holy God, in all the evil that
had come, or could come upon any of us,
was acknowledged, and very particularly,
if that worst of Evils, *To be left unto more
Sin*, had been our Misery. It was applied
unto the case of the poor Malefactor; and
at the same time, it was deplored, That an
Heart full of Murder, set us all, in some sort
on the Level with him, tho' we had not
been left unto the Capital Acts of it; where-
in the Free-Grace of Heaven was to be won-

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'dred at : And it was desired, That if any of
 ' us had any Malice or Hatred in his Heart
 ' against his Neighbour, such *Tendencies* and
 ' Approaches towards Murder, might be heartily
 ' Repented of, and Graciously Pardoned.
 ' The Divine Proclamation of a *Pardon*, for
 ' the chief of Sinners, was then laid hold up-
 ' on ; and the *Fountain open for Sin* and for Un-
 ' cleaneſſes, was repair'd unto. The Dying
 ' Young man was carried *thither*. Thanks
 ' were given to the Glorious God, for the
 ' comfortable Symptoms, which we ſaw, of a
 ' genuine *Repentance* produced in him : And
 ' that the People of God, who had with ſuch
 ' fervent *Supplications* been concerned for
 ' him, had Hope that God had heard the voice
 ' of their *Supplications*. It was importunately
 ' begg'd, That it might be found a Real,
 ' Thorough, Saving Work, and an *Hope* that
 ' will not make aſhamed ; and the ſeveral Arti-
 ' cles of it, were particularly, and with ſome
 ' Importunity inſiſted on. The *Compaſſion* of
 ' good Men for the Young man, was expreſ-
 ' ſed ; and it was declared, that Obedience
 ' to the Law of the Holy God, which forbid
 ' any *Satisfaction* to be taken for the Life of a
 ' Murderer, was that which had brought on
 ' the ſad Work of that Afternoon. But it
 ' was pleaded, That tho' there was no Par-
 ' don to be had for *this Life*, yet the Young
 ' man might be Pardoned for a *Better Life*.
 ' And ſince there is Joy in Heaven among the
 ' Angels of God over a Repenting Sinner, it was
 ' pray'd, that this might be found ſuch an
 ' one,

one, and presently fall into the Hands of
 good *Angels* Rejoycing over him, and Glo-
 riously Triumphant in What *Sovereign Grace*
 may fetch from Dungeons & from Gibbets.
 And since our dear Saviour said unto a
 Malefactor on the Day wherein He died,
 that He would not only Remember him
 when He came in His Kingdom, but also give
 him to be That Day in Paradise, it was pray'd,
 that the Soul of this Youth, might This Day
 Enter into an Heavenly Place and Rest; now
 the Sorrows of Death compassed him, and the
 Pains of Hell threatned to get hold on him,
 and he call'd on the Name of the Lord, O Lord,
 I beseech thee, Deliver my Soul! It was pray'd,
 That his poor Father might be supported
 under the Heavy Trial, if he should Live
 to hear of what had befallen a Son of his
 Family. And, Finally, it was pray'd, That
 the numerous confluence of People there,
 and especially the Young people, might be
 Effectually warned by the awful Spectacle
 before them, to shun the pathes of the De-
 stroyer, & not by persisting in Sin, provoke
 the Holy one to Leave them unto such
 things, as they now little imagined.

These and some other such things, were in
 that prayer insisted on; which had not been
 here at all mention'd. if the mention thereof
 had not been by some desired.

After this, the Young man himself kneel'd
 down in the Cart, upon his Coffin, and made
 a short, but pertinent and pathetick prayer;
 confessing the demerit of his Crimes, com-

mitting himself into the Hands of his only Saviour, and Expressing his Hope of the Mercy of God unto him.

He then rose up, and the Execution was proceeded in; wherein, and from the Beginning, to the End he Express'd the least *Reluctancy*, that has ordinarily been seen in Circumstances like to his; and a *Desire of Death*, rather than an *Horror* of it. People at a distance, interpreted it as a sort of *Stupidity*; but unto them who were better acquainted with his condition, it seem'd the Effect of a better principle. There is good Ground for Hope, that the means of Good which he had enjoy'd, were not lost upon him; and that he now *Sings the Righteousness and Benignity of God the Saviour, who may have delivered him from his Blood guiltiness*; and

the numerous confessions of People there, and especially the Young people, might be frequently warned by the awful example before them, to shun the snare of the Devil, & not by persisting in sin, provoke the Holy one to leave them unto such things as they now have imagined.

These and other things, were in that prayer intreated on; which had not been here or at another, if the nation thereof

After this the Young man himself descended down in the Car, upon his knees, and made a short but pertinent and pious prayer, containing the demands of his Graces, &c.

Restraints

Merciful & Wonderful.

Boston-Lecture. 10. d. 7. m. 1713.

Gen. XX. 6.

*I With-held thee from Sinning a-
gainst Me.*

A Most astonishing Favour
of Heaven! Too little
acknowledged, not near
enough Celebrated, a-
mong the Sinful Chil-
dren of Men. We have many Calls to
take a thankful Notice of a Mercy,
wherein we are so highly favoured;
Very mighty Calls, when we see what
horrid and bloody Sin, some of our
A Brethren

Brethren are Left unto; What fearful Ruine some have brought upon themselves, by the Sin which they have been Left unto. 'Tis what the Lamentable Object we have now before us doth very Loudly Call us to; 'Tis the most proper Use to be made of such a Spectacle!

It is a strange Occurrence that my Text refers unto. The Father of the Faithful, once and again falling into the Errors of Unbelief. His Life was filled with Trials; But in them all, the Faithfulness of the Glorious God unto His Promises, was marvellously illustrated. The Blessed God, had once and again promised, That He would be a God unto the Offspring of Abraham. And yet this famous Patriarch, did once and again after some sort Alienate the Promises, and by his own Act, exposed his Wife to such Hazards, that he had lost the Fulfilment of the Promises, if God had not in a way of Sovereign Grace marvellously stepped in for his Deliverance. Formerly in the Court

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Court of *Egypt*, and now in the Court of *Gerar*, our Patriarch dissembled his Relation to his Wife, apprehending that his Life might be in danger among so debauch'd a people, if it had been known, how he was related unto her. It is not now a *Time*, nor is it here a *Place*, to declare at large, the Judgment which the Ancients, as well as the Moderns, have pass'd upon this Action of *Abraham*; an Action Looking so like a prostitution; how severely some have *Condemned* it, how plausibly some have *Defended* it. Were I Empannell'd on the *Jury*, I should not consent that either the one or the other draw up the *Verdict*; with my Consent, my dear *Calvin* should be the Foreman, tho' I am aware, how the *Jesuits* reproach him for his *Verdict* upon it, which after all the Candour he can use, yet says, When we have done all, we must own, *Infidelitate peccavit*, he was really Guilty of some *Unbelief*, not relying so much on the *Providence* of God, in a way of plain-
 A. 2. dealing,

dealing, as he should have done. The Compassion of God unto His Poor, Frail, Distressed Servant on this occasion was wonderful! Had the Intention of *Abimelek* to Marry this Lady, been accomplished, he had been plunged into a Criminal *Adultery*; A Crime whereof, as much a *Pagan* as he was, he yet own'd, It would have been a Great Sin upon him, and upon his Government. But while the Sin was yet only intended, and under the alleviating Circumstance of, A mistake of the Person too, God smote *Abimelek* with a Fit of Illness, and his Court also with *Plagues* which had in them something Extraordinary. While he was in much concern about these things, God in a *Dream* informed him of the Cause why these *Plagues* were come, & of the way to remove them. In the XXXIII Chapter of *Job*, you have a large Paragraph, concerning a *Dream* wherein God withdraws a man from his purpose; And I suspect, that this History of *Abimelek* might be therein referred

fer'd unto. The only Clause of the History, now to be insisted on, is, that Passage in the Speech of God, unto the *Awakened Soul* of the Prince now in a *Dream*, wherein He spoke once, yea, twice unto him; He says, *I with-held thee from Sinning against me.* It is mentioned as a Singular Kindness, a Special Kindness of God unto him. The Trouble that he suffered, was it seems a vast Kindness, in that it with-held him from Sinning against the Glorious God. It was, as *Elihu* speaks, in the Text I told you of, *To keep back his Soul from the Pit, and his Life from perishing by the Sword.*

The DOCTRINE then before us, will be this;

The most Gracious God, in an excellent manner displays his Grace towards the Sinful Children of Men, in with-holding them from Sinning against him.

To be preserved from Sin, 'tis to en-

joy a preservation, that, my Brethren, we cannot be too Thankful for.

Two things now demand a most affectionate Consideration with us; First the *Method*, and then the *Mercy*, of this Happiness, *I with-held thee from Sinning against me.*

I. The *Method* of our Good God, in *With-holding us from Sinning against him*; This is various, and curious, and has many Wonders in it. We will take the Surprizing Subject into our Contemplation.

First; Our Good God *With-holds* the *Temptations* and *Occasions* of *Sin*; This is one *Method* in which *He with-holds us from Sinning against him*. There is an Army of *Evil Spirits*, united under one Leader, for which cause they all go under the single Name of, *Satan*, or, *The Devil*. The Design of these *Evil Spirits*, is to Tempt us unto *Sin*, that so they may by their *Temptations* bring us under their *Condemnation*. Our *Tempter, the Devil, goes about, seeking whom*

whom he may Deceive into Sin, & by Deceiving Devour them. As our Lord said, Luk. XXII. 31. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you*: So may it more or less be said, about every man in the World; *Sinner, Sinner, Satan the Tempter hath desired, that he may have thee, to Tempt thee unto some undoing Wickedness.* Indeed Satan must have the permission of God for it, before he can fall upon us. But now our God very often does not permit *Satan*, to Tempt us with such Fury, and such Success, as he would otherwise assault us withal. Our God has the Tempter in a Chain; He holds in the Ty-Dog. He withholds the Tempter from Ensnaring of us, and thereby He withholds us from falling into the Snare of the Wicked. There are People set upon mischief. 'Tis very strange that they do no more. 'Tis because God Chains up the Devil, and won't let him suggest unto them, what they may do. Our *Indians* had else done a thousand times more mischief, than

than they have, to our Plantations. This *World* is also full of those Things, which are the *Occasions*, the *Incentives*, the *Inducements* of *Sin*. The *Stumbling Blocks* of *Iniquity* do even fill the *World*. But our *God with-holds us from Sin*, by *with-holding* from us, those things that would *provoke* us to *Sin*. He takes the *Stumbling-blocks* out of our way, & so *withholds* us from *Falling* into *Sin* upon them. Our *God withholds* us from the exorbitant *Out-breakings* of the *Lust of the Flesh*, and the *Lust of the Eye*, and the *Pride of Life*, by *with-holding* from us the *Objects*, that are the *Fuel* of them. We say, 'Tis opportunity that makes a *Thief*. Our *God withholds* many a man from many a *Theft* & other *Sins* by this; He won't give him an *Opportunity*. He won't give *Riches* to one man; and to the man is *withheld* from the *Denying of God*. He won't pinch another man with *Poverty*; and so the man is *withheld* from *Taking the Name of God in vain*. If *God* should order for men, some Conditions, & some
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Employments, & some Companions, which He witholds from them, Verily, they would be drawn into abundance of Sin, more than they are.

Secondly, The *Diverting* of us from Sin, by the Good Hand of God, this is one *Method* used by our Good God in *witholding* us from Sin. We should Sin more than we do, but our God *witholds* us, by finding something else for us to do. One gave this agreeable Account, how he kept his Innocency; *The Devil don't find me at Leisure, to do what he would have me to do.* Infuriated Saul would have Embrued his hands in the Blood of a Servant of God, but God call'd him off! We read, 1 Sam. XXIII. 27. *There came a Messenger unto Saul, saying, Hastie thee, and come away: ---You know for what.* Many such a *Messenger* comes unto us from God, that calls us another way, when we are just upon some sinful perpetrations. The *Flood* seems to have been as notable, as General, an Example of this Observation. The
Curse

Curse of the *Flood*, is in this turn'd into a *Blessing* on the World. The more fructifying mould of the Earth, has been so dammified by the *Flood*, that men live now with more Difficulty than they did before. No man that knows the Heart of man, will deny, that a *Flood* of *Wickedness* is prevented in the World, by mens being so necessarily taken up how to Live in the World. What infinite *Wickedness* would men be hatching every where, if they had nothing else to do! If the World had nothing but *Fruitful Plains* in it, it would soon be an Entire *Sodom*, and fit for nothing but a *Conflagration*. Indeed our God withholds us from *Sin*, when he *Compels* us to *Work*. For the most part, our God plunges us into such indigent Circumstances, that the most of our *Thought*, and our *Time*, goes to the *Earning* of our *Bread*. By Engaging us in our daily *Occupations*, without which we and our Families would starve, Our God withholds us from *Sin*ning against Him. And some-

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sometimes when our *Vocations* are not enough to Engross our Care, and withhold us from Sin, our *Vexations* must; God finds out for us *Vexations* that shall. One man is hampered with such a *Mulady*; another man is Embroided with such an *Enemy*; a third man is taken up with such an *Inconvenience*. Why so; The Voice of the All-wise God unto us in these things is, Thus I withheld thee from Sinning against me!

Thirdly; *Interest, Interest*; That is a Surprising Method of God; That is a strong sort of a *Curb*, where with our God Withholds us from Sinning against Him. The Metal which the *Curb* is usually made of, is well known in the World. We say, *Interest* will not Ly; tho' it will often make men do it. Every man is True to that, which he takes to be his *Interest*. This is a most Exquisite Policy of Heaven, as I may call it, in the Government of the World. *Humane Society*, would be Damaged, yea, Disbanded,

banded, if some Sins were not become very *odious*; which yet men are naturally enough prone unto; It is *Interest* that has made them *Odious*; men feel 'tis for their *Interest* that they should be so. God makes the Transgressors feel that word; Hab. II. 9, 10. *Wo to him that Covereth an Evil Covetousness; Thou hast consulted shame to thy self.* God makes men see, that by such and such Sins, they shall bring a Mischief on themselves; This *withholds them from Sinning against Him!* There is a Detestable Generation of men, who go under the Name of *Deists*. These Dangerous Wretches pretend unto a kind of *Moral Vertue*; Their *Moral Vertue* is this; A man expects the *Civilities* of his Neighbours; his Condition would be insupportable should his Neighbours count him unworthy of their *Civilities*. Now, that a man may not Lose the *Civilities* of others, he must then treat them with *Civilities*. These are all the *Bonds of a Good Behaviour*, that these Baptised Infidels are

are sensible of. This is all, that keeps the Dangerous *Monsters*, from Stealing, and Lying, and Murder. Our God witholds men from Sin, by making them see, that their Neighbours will else withhold their *Civilities* from them. Tis the Hope of Gain, by their show of some *Godliness*, that witholds many men from the Grosest Efforts of *Un-godliness*.

Fourthly, There is the Method of *Conscience*; Our God witholds us from Sin, by the Controul of *Conscience*, which He has placed as His Deputy in our Souls. Men durst not Sin as they would, because of what the *Candle of the Lord* shows unto them; they can't Sin except they put out this *Candle*. A *Conscience* which tells them, That they who do such things are worthy of *Death*; The *Conscience* which causes a Wicked man, to do what no other man could bring him to; Act. XXIV. 25. To Tremble at the Thoughts of a *Judgment to come*. That stands in the way of many a man, like an *Angel* with a *Flaming*

aming Sword, and stops him, when his
Way is perverse before the Lord.

And our God, by ordering a Good
Education for us, keeps our Conscience
in a more Wakeful and Active Plight;
so that we cannot get over the Checks
which it gives unto us. This Light
within, tho' it be so darkened that it is
not a sufficient Guide unto Life, yet it
shows us many Fair Things, and like
a Fire it scalds us if we do any Foul
ones. The Supream Governour of
the World holds the World in order
by this Golden Engine, & witholds men
from very much of the Disorder which
else they would rush into. Many a
man would Murder his Parents, De-
stroy his own Wife, Debauch his
Neighbours, Blaspheme God, Burn
down the Town, and run a muck a-
mong the people, if some Conscience
did not withhold men from Sinning at
such a rate of Outrageous Madness.
The men who proclaim it, that they
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its Admonitions, they are but so many *Beasts of Prey* let loose upon the World; It is from the *Curse of God*, when such *Increase and Multiply*.

Fifthly, and Finally. I can show you a more *Excellent Way*, than all of this. There are those whom a Good God *Withholds from Sin*, by infusing into their Souls a *Principle of Grace*, which is contrary to *Sin*; A *Principle* under the power whereof, men cannot *Sin* like other men. A *Principle of Piety* does God shower down from Heaven, into the Souls of some; A *Principle of Respect* unto all the *Holy and Just and Good Laws of Heaven*. By such a *Principle* the *Dispositions to Sin* in the Hearts of Good men are *Mortified*; & the *Considerations* which deter from *Sin*, are *Entertained* with a most *Lively Efficacy*. Under the force of such a *Principle*, a man cannot but hate *Sin*, and Loath *Sin*, and refuse to *Sin*; and if he be pressed unto *Sin*, he will say, *Gen. XXXIX.*

9. *How shall I do this Wickedness, and*

Sin against God? O admirable way of being Withheld from Sin! To be inspired with an Antipathy to every known Sin. The New Nature in a Child of God says to him, No, Thou shalt not Sin; Oh! Do not the Abominable Thing, which is hated by the Soul of God! This lays a Glorious Restraint upon him. Oh! that we were more commonly Restrained so! But now,

II. The Mercy of our Good God, in thus Withholding us from Sinning against Him; This is what we are to wonder at; and what exceedingly bespeaks our Praises unto Him. This will appear immediately. For,

First. We shall fall into Sin, yea, into all manner of Sin and Blasphemy, and such as would never be Forgiven too, if our God Withhold us not. We are every one of us Depraved with Original Sin; and this our Original Sin is the Original of Every Sin; it contains in it a propensity to every Sin. We must every one of us all confess, Behold, I was shapen in Iniquity. We must every one of us make that Confession,

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on, The whole *Imagination* of our *Heart* is only *Evil* continually. Our *First Parents*, whom God justly made the *Representatives* of all *Mankind*, were made *Mutable*. And it was no unjust Thing in the Sovereign One to make them so: *Immutability* is the *Prerogative* of none but the Infinite *GOD*. These our *Parents*, abused their own *Liberty*, and brought upon themselves a most *Sinful Pravity*; which cannot but be derived now unto us their *Unhappy Children*; *A Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters*! We are born with *Hearts* whereof we read, *Matt. XVI. 19. There proceed out of them, Evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, False witness, Blasphemies*. There is no *Heart* among us, but if God should not withhold it, rapid streams of *Sin* would burst from it, and whole *Torrents* of *Iniquity*. Bring in a *Catalogue* of all the *Crying Sins* found any where among the *Children of men*, there is no *Heart* among us, but what would soon carry us into the worst of them all, if God *Withheld* us not. And if God should allow *Satan* to fill this *Heart*, an *Heart* that is of it self so *desperately wicked*, no man alive can imagine to how a *desperate* a

Degree of Wickedness we should be carried, and with how vehement an Impetuosity! An Evil Spirit not forbidden by God, will go forth, and persuade an Ahab, and prevail also, to any thing in the World. If God should not Withhold our Adversary from hurting of us, his Devices would soon be too cunning for us: The Charms and Chains of Hell would soon bring the last Confusion upon us.

Secondly. We are very Unworthy that God should withhold us from Sinning against Him; our Frequent Sinning has Left us in the greatest Unworthiness of such a Mercy! By our former Sins, we deserve to be left unto further Sins. The punishment of Sin with Sin, is no uncommon procedure in the tremendous Dispensations of God. Men Sin with Delight; They signalize their Love of Sin, their Choice of Sin. The Justice of God then passes this Doom upon them, Let them go on to Sin! They be not willing to be hindred! When people will not Hearken to the Voice of God, it is but a Righteous Thing with him, To give them up unto the Lusts of their own Hearts, and let them walk in their own Counsels, which you may be sure, will be

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be bad enough. The Righteousness of God never shines brighter than in that black Event of wilful Sinning; Rom. I. 26. *For this cause, God gave them up to vile Affections.* If we are withheld from any Sin, that ever any Mortal fell into, we must say, Lord, *This is what I am not worthy of!* Tis, *Mercy, Mercy*, that withholds us from Sin; for we can plead no Merit of our own for such a Blessing. In begging to be withheld from Sin, our Style must be that; *God be merciful to me a Sinner!* Tis to be very Mercifully, that is to say, Undeservedly dealt withal.

Thirdly. Tis a Great Mercy sure, to be Withheld from the Greatest Evil; If we are not Withheld from Sinning against God, we fall into the Greatest Evil in the world. Sin, tis the Greatest Evil. Our Saviour, who is the Good One, has call'd it, Joh. XVI. 5. *The Evil.* A Remarkable Escape from some Extream Hazard of perishing, we do with a shuddering Horror, look back upon it. We give a start, when the Thought of it suddenly darts into our minds; We almost swoon away, when we Think what we were so near unto. My Friend, When thou art Withheld from Sin, 'tis an Escape,

cape, which thy Soul may be well amazed in Reflecting on. Thou mayst with a Transport of Joy cry out, *My Soul is escaped, as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler*: Oh! the Mercy, Oh! the Mercy of it! When our God says, *I have withheld thee from Sinning against me, He does in Effect say, I have withheld thee from throwing thy self into many Sorrows; I have withheld thee from wronging thy own Soul; I have withheld thee from the worst thing that could have befallen thee. To Sin, 'Tis to Deny the God that is Above. 'Tis a sad Thing to be Left unto so vile a Thing. To Sin, 'Tis to do that for which the Wrath of God comes. To be Withheld from Sin, 'tis to be withheld from stepping over a dismal Precipice; from tumbling down into a Devouring Fire, and Everlasting Burnings. O thou Saved of the Lord, Withheld from Sin, thy Song may be that; Lord, Thou deliveredst my Soul from Death, my Eyes from Tears, and my Feet from Falls. The Mercy cannot be too highly spoken of.*

APPLICATION.

I. There are some Occurrences in the World, that are very much to be wondered

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dred at ; But we now see the Reason of those Wondrous Occurrences. I will entertain you with the Mention of Two or Three Things, whereof we must now say, *These are the Doings of the Lord, and they are marvellous in our eyes.* If there were not a Good God, who witholds men from Sinning against Him, the World would not have such a Respite from such Wonderful Miseries, which I shall now tell you of.

First. We may Wonder that some Destructive Wickednesses are not ever now and then done in the World, by people that are Wicked enough to do them. There are people, who have nothing within them, to withold them, from such Things as are too horrible to be spoken of. People there are, who would Stick at nothing, that they could see themselves able to do, that they may ruine others, and Enrich themselves. People there are, who if it came into their Minds, what they are capable of doing, and yet might Ly Concealed after all, and it may be Roast their own Eggs into the Bargain, would soon be the Actors of direful Tragedies ! Many an honest man, is aware of Wayes to do incredible Mischief, which if some

Wicked

Wicked men should be as much aware of, they would be more perilous Creatures, than the *Dragon* of *Hebruria*, whereof *Dion* tells us, that after he had made fearful Devastations, he was killed with a Thunderbolt. The men are *Devils*, and very cunning and subtil *Devils* too; but they have *Chains of Darkness* upon them. They don't see what they can do: And would if they saw it. Prudence will direct, that I should not go too far in Explaining my self. -- But this I may say; There are People that would make a very Light matter of a *Perjury*; they would make nothing for a small matter to *For swear* themselves. 'Tis a wonder, that no more *Nabaths* are Sworn out of their Lives, or at least out of their *Vineyards*, by them that have no Yoke upon them. 'Tis very strange! And so is another thing, that I will venture to speak of. He that is willing to throw away his own *Life*, may easily be master of *Another mans*. And yet, you have known many people set upon throwing away their own *Lives*. But you scarce ever knew one of these desperate *Suicides* disposed unto the killing of any besides themselves. What is the Reason of this? Our Good God has acquainted

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acquainted us ; I withheld them !

Secondly. We may wonder, That this World is not an entire *Aceldama*, and that it Swims not with Blood, even up to the *Horse-bridles*. There are cursed *Fires* Latent in the Souls of men ; *Fires* that have sometimes broke out, and burnt all round about, burnt unto the very Foundations of the Mountains, burnt down all before them. A very Little Thing will serve sometimes, to blow up these *Fires* ; *Maxima odia ex Levissimis causis* ! And then a whole Nation becomes a formidable *Volcano* ; no more habitable than a *Vesuvio*. Our Apostle speaks, as if every man had the Heart of a *Murderer* in him ; and Rom. III. 15, 16. Feet swift to shed Blood ; Destruction and Misery in their wayes. We see some Commit bloody *Murders*. Why don't they grow as common, as they did a little before the Final Catastrophe on *Jerusalem* ! The Venemous Hearts of Men, have in them the Root, which all *Murders* grow upon. Sometimes a Cup of poison to be trembled at, has been put into the Hands of Nations ; Then the Intoxicated Nations have run mad ; have

have been furiously set upon destroying one another ; have sheathed their Swords in one anothers bowels, with a Rage that has reached up to Heaven. The Passions have been of old called ; *The wild beasts of the Soul*. If those *Wild Beasts* are once let loose, they make fearful Depredations ; they turn *Populous Regions* into a *Wilderness* ! When a *Kingdom* is divided against it self, what *Anarchies*, what *Opiates* are they, that keep under the worst of all *Phrensies*, that would soon bring all to Desolation ! When Distracted People think themselves oppressed, what is it that keeps under the *Massanello's*, or keeps things in the *Calm*, which tis said, the *French Salvages* told a greater than themselves, was the thing which of all they had seen, they most admired at ? Who is it that *Stills the Noise of the Seas, and the Tumult of the People* ? Our Good God has acquainted us with the Reason of this ; *I withheld them* !

Thirdly. We may wonder, That there is any True People of God Left in the World ; and that the *Burning Bush* is not Consumed. Our Lord-Redeemer has thro' all Ages, a Church visibly Existing on the Face of the Earth ; His Wil-

ling

king, and His Holy People; The Generation of them that seek Him: A Generation which Condemns the World, and Offends it, and Affronts it, and must not marvel, if it be hated of the World. Satan, who is the God of this World, and the Spirit that works in the Children of Disobedience, fills his Children with an implacable Aversion and Antipathy for this People of God. They will grant not only Liberties, but also Preferments, to Devils Incarnate; yea, tho' they may differ very much among one another. But they will turn every Stone, that the Children of God may be Discouraged, and even Exterminated. The Persecution of Dissenters, has been in all Ages carried on; Always with most Unreasonable Barbarities, and sometimes to an Extremity of cruel Dissipations; even such an Extremity, that the Diocletians on the Thrones of Iniquity, have boasted, of a Superstitious Christiana desolata; That there was no more Christianity left in the World. But still the Church of our Lord, Out-lives the Attempts of all its Adversaries, yea, gains ground, grows great, & improves by those Attempts; and having Ob-

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tained Help from God, it continues to this Day. The Song of the Church in all Ages hath been that; Psa. LXXVI. 10. Surely, The wrath of man shall praise thee, the Remainder of that Wrath shalt thou Restrain. We can hardly tell whence it is, That tho' the Wolves bring forth many more at a Litter, than the Sheep; and we seldom hear of a Wolf killed, when the Sheep is every day Led into the Shambles; yet there are a thousand times more Sheep known in the World than there are of those ravening Devourers. But I now propound a much stranger thing than this. The Faithful People of God, are Counted like Sheep for the slaughter all the Day long. They are but a Little Flock, a very Little Little Flock; The Wolves, they, as it was of Old said about a Syrian Herd of them, Fill the Country. Now, Whence is it, that the Church is not utterly cut off; & the Name of it, no more had in Remembrance? Why have no Dayes of Purim, and of Bartholomew, nor Irish Massacres totally Extinguished it? Our Good God has acquainted us with the Reason of it; I withheld them. Oh! Let us now Give to our Good God, the Glory of such Wonderful Dispensations.

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II. A Lesson of Wondrous Thankfulness is to be now taught unto those, whom God has *Witheld* from Sinning against Him. Sirs, You are *Thankful*, no doubt, that you have been *Witheld* from Things that would have brought *Sicknesses* upon you; or Things that would have wounded you with incurable *Reproaches*; That you have been *Witheld* from *Wants* and *Straits*, by which your *Lives* would have been Embittered; That you have been *Witheld* from *grievous Deaths*, by frightful *Accidents* which have threatened them. You are very much to Blame, if you are not very *Thankful* for such Deliverances; *Unholy*, if *Unthankful*! But are you *Thankful* that you have been *Witheld* from *Sinning* against the Glorious GOD? This, O Redeemed Ones, This is a greater Cause for *Thanksgiving*, than any of the rest. It may be, some of you have been all your *Dayes* hitherto upheld, and *witheld* from doing any Thing, of a *Scandalous* Aspect; Like the Young man in the Gospel, You have been kept from your *Youth-up*, from every Thing that may be called, *Scandalous*. Oh! Be very *Thankful*, for so rare a *Mercy*; so rich a *Mercy*. Or, if not so,

yet you have been withheld from such Scandals as you have seen Others fall into. God has not Left you to make your selves Prodiges of Sin; God has not hang'd you up in Chains, among the Monuments of his Wrath; Others no worse by Nature than you, have been so. Even in *This*, you have Ground of Thankfulness. 'Tis a Mercy of God; And a meer Mercy it is! Yea, My Hearers, I believe there are very few of you, but what may call to mind, that you have been at some Time or other, just upon the point of doing some very horrible Thing! You have been very violently push'd on, to do some horrible Thing, which if it had been done, you had been the most Undone Things in the World; Undone for Both Worlds! You may make that Report; Psal. LXXIII. 2. *As for me, my Feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipt.* But God stept in, and saved you. O fall down before the Lord, and thankfully admire so obliging a Mercy; and say, Bless the Lord, O my Soul; *Lifeless thee, O my God, for thou hast delivered my Soul, in delivering my Feet from the Falls I have been so near unto.*

I will make Two Remarks on the Gratitude which is now called for. The One

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One is this; In this thing it may so fall out, that you may give a shining Demonstration of your Sincerity before the Lord. It may be, 'tis by some fore and sharp Affliction upon you, that God has Witheld you from Sinning against Him. Well, Can you now so far heartily give Thanks to God for this Affliction? and can you heartily say, Lord, I bless thee, that thou dost rather bind me in Affliction and Iron, and bring down my Heart with Labour, then let me run Loose in the broad way that Leads unto Destruction? He was a Saint of God, who could say; Psal. CXIX. 67, 71. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy Word. It is good for me, that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy Statutes. O Thou Sin-hating Soul; This would be a mark of Sincerity, that would have no less than an Evident Token of Salvation in it. The Other is this; You must not fall into a Dream, that a Negative Religion will be enough to secure your Blessedness. Many men, because they have been Witheld from such Things as many others are chargeable withall, they fancy they have Religion enough. They

If Sinners Entice thee to be and to do like themselves, Oh! Consent, thou mayest Fly from them, as thou wouldst from the worst of Enemies; Make no Friends ship with them, lest thou Get a Snare to thy Soul. But O you, Enticers, What will be your Doom from God? What shall be given to you, or what shall be done to you, or, What shall be said of you, O ye Mischievous Ones? An Apple of God once fixing his Eyes on one of your Tribe, said, O Full of all Mischief, Thou Child of the Devil! Were such a Man of God now to speak, he would surely tell you Wretches, The Devil is your Father, you do his work. You shall be punished with your Father, and they who will Curse the Day that ever they saw you, will give a dreadful Aggravation to your punishment. On the other side; Shall not we do what we can, to Withstand Others from Sin? 'Tis God-like; A most amiable Imitation of God; And, O how acceptable to the Holy Lord! But what shall be done? Publick Officers may do very much in the Execution of their Offices. These are Masters of Restraint. And Oh! that all such would set themselves to think, What may I do, that Sin may be more discountenanced? God

God forbid, they should fall under that Blame, *They have overpassed the Deeds of the Wicked.* But Private Christians may also do much by their Faithful and Loving Admonitions. Oh! Let us Call upon one another, & Exhort one another daily, lest any be hardened, thro' the Deceitfulness of Sin. Our Warrant, it is unquestionable; Lev. XIX. 17. *Thou shalt Rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.* And, if we all owe this Duty to one another, if none but the Children of Cain will say, *Am I my Brother's keeper?* O Parents, How much do you owe this Duty unto your own Children, To Withhold them from Sinning against God? Those Children of yours, Born like the Wild Asses Colt, & as Wild and Mad, into what Sin will they run headlong, and headstrong, if you do not Withhold them? And can you bear to see them Sinning against your God, and Theirs, and as Possessed Ones keep cutting & wounding themselves among the Monuments of the Dead? Oh! Be concerned for them. Instruct them; Advise them; Lay the Charges of God upon them; Enquire into their Manners; Do not suffer them in any Evil Manners; not with Companions that may Corrupt their

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their Good Manners. Have you forgot the Vengeance of God, on the House of Eli, when his Children made themselves Vile, and he Restrained them not? If they do any Vile Things, from which you can Withhold them, Verily, you make them Guilt your own; and be it known to you, God will do such Things upon both of you, as your Ears might well single out the hearing of. I will now say but this; If the Children must go on as Children left unto themselves, and you will not Withhold them, they will bring you to Shame, and themselves to Hell, and your Indulgence that will not allow you to make them sensible, that it is an Evil Thing and a Bitter, to Sin against God; will be found, Bitterness in the Latter End.

IV. But what if we have not been Withheld from Sinning against the Holy God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and who cannot Look upon Iniquity? Oh! Let us then mourn exceedingly before the Lord, and not withhold our Tears upon an Occasion so very deplorable! My Brethren, Let us look back on what is past, and Consider our Ways. It may be, we shall find, that we have grievously

voulsly, and heinously, perhaps *notoriously* Miscarried, in our Time. What shall we now do, but *Walk softly* all our Days in the *Bitterness* of our Soul, from the Remembrance of our past Miscarriages. We would not have the Holy One to do it against us, but let us *Remember* against *our selves*, our *Former Iniquities*; and upon the Review thereof, Let our Lamentations be those; Lam. III. 19, 20, *Remembering the Wormwood and the Gall, my Soul has them still in Remembrance, & is humbled in me.* Have we been Left unto such as I may call, *Sins of Distinction*? It is a most humbling Remark that we have to make upon it. Other Dealings of God with us, be they never so Bitter Ones, may be but *Paternal Chastisements* after all. But when God leaves us to *Sin* against Him, This looks as if he dealt more *Indictively* with us. Alas, Herein He has wounded us with the wound of an *Enemy*, and with the Chastisement of a very *Angry One*. O dreadful, O dreadful, Indignation of God! We may now cry out, O Lord, Thou hast rebuked me in thy wrath; with wounds that stink & are corrupt, because of my Foolishness. The Wise man says concerning the Sins of *Unchastity*; *They are the Abhorred of the Lord,*

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Lord, that fall into them ! I may say unto you, Sirs, To be given up to Sin, 'tis a plague for a Devil ! Oh, Plague a thousand times more horrible than the Pestilence that is the Terror of the Night ! How can we be free from Terror, when we see our selves thus horribly plagued, and in so hot a Displeasure of God !

And now, What remains to be done in this most Lamentable Case ? What, but this ? We must make our Flight unto our Great Saviour, and His Great Sacrifice, and for the Pardon, of our Sin, plead that Blood which Cleanses from all Sin. This must be done with a Repenting Soul : A Soul full of Contrition for Sin ; full of Indignation against our selves for our Sin ; full of Resolution to watch against all Return to our Sin. We must not lay the least Blame on the Holy God, for not Withholding us from Sin, but with an unspeakable Remorse blame our selves for not Looking up unto Him to Withhold us. This Repentance must never be Laid aside ; it must be often Renewed, it must be always Maintained ; it must Live to the Last ; never be laid aside until we Die. The Penitential Psalms, and the Records of our Sins, that call for our Penitence, the very Curtains of

of our Death-bed, as I may say, should have these written upon them. We must hereupon Study to Excel in such Vertues, and such Vertuous Actions, as are very directly contrary to the points wherein we have more Egregiously Sinned. We should set our selves to think, What Good Thing shall I Labour to be, and to do, that I may Glorify God in the way that is most contrary to that wherein I have dishonoured Him? Upon this, All our past Sins will be before the Lord, as if they had never been at all. A God ready to pardon, will now say of us, I will Remember their Sins no more. However, with us they should not be so. We should always Remember them. I am now preparing, A Treadle out of a Kiper. Since we have not been Witheld from some very Enormous Out-breakings of Sin, why this very Thing we may and should be Witheld from One Sin, which is very offensive to the most High God; such an Offence, that He knows them, & throws them afar off, and makes Rejected Lepers of them that are under the power of it; PRIDE is that Sin. It may be, our Pride caused our Fall; And now our Fall may cure our Pride. It may be of Use to Witheld Pride from us.

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us. It may inspire into us, a most Abasing, a most Beautiful *Humility*. After we have so *fallen*, methinks, we should never be *Lifted up* with *Pride* any more. If a *proud Thought* begin to rise in our Minds, we should presently retund it, with such a Stroke upon it; *What! Such a Wretch as I, ever be proud of any thing!* When we meet with any *Contempruous Treatment* among our Neighbours, we should now bear it very patiently. Think, *My Sin has made me a Contemptible Creature!* And let this Thought produce a perfect work of *Patience* in us; *Being Reviled, now Re-vile not again.* And, when we see others *Overtaken with a Fault*, with what *Compassion*, with what *Lenity*, with what *Clemency*, should we now dulcify the *Reproofs*, which we must give unto them! *Considering our selves, how we have been Tempted!* Here the Riddle of, *Meat out of the Eater*, will be accomplished admirably!

But I see one in this *Auditory*, who has very peculiar cause to be *Attentive* unto these Things; and I suppose, he does give such an *Attention*, as can be expected from no one else in this *Congregation of God*. A Young man,
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who has not been *witheld* from a *Sin*, for which now he must not be *witheld* from the *Pit*; he must *hasten to the Pit*, and *none may stay him*. This Youth has with some Expression of Amazement at it, signified unto me, some sense of the *Strange Wayes*, which the Holy One takes to bring home his *Elect* unto Himself. Had he not been Left unto the *Capital Crime* for which he is now to Dy, he thinks he had probably gone on Sinning, and Stupid, and Secure, and Slept himself into a *Damnation that Slumbreth not*. But his *Capital Crime* has bro't him into such *Awakening Circumstances* that he hopes he shall be Effectually bro't home unto God. Ah, poor *David*; I wish, I wish, We all pray, That thou mayst find it so! I need not now Repeat unto you, the *Directions* for a *Sound Repentance*, which the Ministers of God in this Town, are charitably and continually inculcating upon you. There was a *David*, who had the Guilt of *Innocent Blood* upon him; With the Strains and the Cries, and the Tears, of the *Fifty first Psalm*, he found Mercy with God. I know something of the price you set upon that admirable *Psalm*.
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Do so still ; and present before God, the *Blood* of a dear JESUS, for the Expiation of your *Bloody Murder*, and of all the Sins, which have so provoked the Holy One, that He has not *witheld* you from it. That *Blood* is an *Open Fountain* ; yea, *Open* for a *Menasseh*, and for a *Murderer* ! A Country-man of yours, Executed for *Murder*, after his Flight unto that Soul-cleansing Blood, went chearfully to his Execution ; and often used those words ; *God is a Great Forver ! God is a Great Forgiver !* Verily, A Repenting *David* will find Him so.

I will inform the *Auditory*. This poor Young man tells me ; He uses all his *power* to turn unto God ; but he finds he has no *power*, in himself ; He looks up to God for *power*, and owns himself *unworthy* that God should give it him. He tells me, He sees his *Heart* full of *Corruption*, and his *Life* all *Iniquity* ; but he looks on all Sin as most *odious*, because it is an *Offence unto God*. He tells me, That a *Saviour* appears to him, the *best thing* in the word ; & an *Interest* in Him worth a thousand worlds. He tells me, That he desires the *Saviour* to *Reconcile* God unto him, and also to *humble* him,

and give a *New Heart* unto him, & fill his Heart with the *Love of God*. He tells me, That the *Hope* he has of *Mercy* from God, *breaks his Heart* for him; & makes him think, *What he shall do for God*. Particularly, He desires, that his *Sins* may be *known* to all the *World*; & that all the *World* may be warned from him, and *withheld* from Sinning against God. If all this be *Hearty*, 'tis well. *Repentance* in Distress, is often so *Desireful*, that, *Young man*, you cannot be too jealous of your own *Heart*, in yours. But, I shall proceed unto another Article of work, that is now provided for me.

V. Learn where to go, Learn what to do, that we may be *Withheld* from Sinning against our God. Oh! 'Tis a *Mercy*, no Tongue is able to declare how *Desireable*; more to be *Desired* than *Gold*, than *much fine Gold*! And one may shake to think, what they who are not very *Desirous* of it, may be *Left* unto.

There are especially Three Counsils, which I am now to tender you.

First. You must not be too *Confident*; you must beware of rash *Confidence*. Don't *Confidently* presume upon it, That
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there is any *One Sin*, from which you can *Withhold your selves*. I tell you truly, There is no *One Sin* more certainly, and more awfully corrected, by a mans being *Left* unto some very *flagrant Sin*, than this *Vain Presumption*. The best Advice that can be given us, is that ; 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Let him that thinks, he stands, take heed lest he fall*. When we see any one fall into the most *Atrocious Crimes* that can be found among the *Sons of Men*, whose *Hearts* are fully set in them to do *Evil*; it becomes us to *Reflect* with one of the pious *Ancients*; *Ille heri, Ego hodie, Tu cras*. He fell yesterday, because *Left* unto himself; I shall fall *To Day*, and, you, my *Brother*, will fall *To morrow*, if God Leave us, as He did that *Fallen Sinner*. Don't say within your selves, (I use the Term *within your selves*, because few have so little Wit, as to speak it audibly;) *Well, I am sure, I shall never do so Base a Thing, as I have seen done by such a man*. Man, my *Heart* akes, to hear thee say so. When *David* had his *Heart smiting* him, for a small *Disrespect* shown unto a *Father-in-law*, had any one told him, *Sir, You shall one Day fall into very filthy Adulteries, and when you have done so, instead of taking*

an easie way to cover them, you shall fly to treacherous and barbarous Murders for the Covering of them, and the whole world shall in all Ages be astonished at what you'll be Left unto! Doubtless, he would have derided the prædiction; He would have said, It is impossible! When Peter was told, that he would within a few Hours, Deny, Renounce, Forswear the Lord, whom he thought, he lov'd above a thousand Worlds; did he believe a word of it? But all the World have with Astonishment seen the Consequences! David Wallis once thought as little as another man, that he should ever come, to what we now see him come to. Oh! Work out your own Salvation with fear & trembling, of what you may be Left unto.

Secondly. Prayer to God, with Faith in the only Saviour, who is Able to keep you from falling; This is a most necessary Course, that you may not Fall to the breaking of your Bones; Fall into the horrible Pit. Our dear Saviour, has undertaken to keep His people, from the Falls into Sin, that might Separate them from the Love of God. All the Grace that is needful to keep us from any Falls, 'tis Lodg'd and Laid up in our dear Saviour for us. When we come into the Cove-
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nant of Grace, 'tis with a Consent, That
our Saviour shall be our Keeper: This
incomparable Nazarene. We say to
Him, Lord, thou art He that keeps my
Soul! And we Lay Hold on that word,
The Lord shall preserve thy Soul. But
then, frequent must be our Supplications
unto the Lord. Supplicate at that rate;
Oh! Let not my Heart be inclined unto
any Evil Thing! Supplicate at that rate;
Oh! Do thou hold me up and I shall be
safe; and I shall have Respect unto thy
Statutes continually! Supplicate at that
rate? Consider me, O Lord my God, Lest
my Enemy say, I have prevailed against
him! Tis a most suitable petition for
you; Psal. CXIX. 116. Lord, Uphold me,
according to thy Word. Souls, you are
not so much urged unto that Prayer,
Lord, Withhold me from a state of Pover-
ty: For one may be poor in this World,
and Rich in Faith. You are not so much
urged unto that Prayer, Lord, Withhold
me from a Disgraced or a Despised Name.
For one may have their Honour here
Laid in the Dust, and yet have a Name
written in Heaven. You are not so much
urged unto that Prayer, Lord, Withhold
me from Sickneses; For one may be Sick,
and yet be one whom Jesus loves. But
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this, this is the *Prayer* I urge you to; *Lord, Withhold me from Sinning against thee.* Think a thousand times on that word, *Wo unto them, when I depart from them!*

Thirdly. Take the *Warnings* of such as have not been withheld from Sin; Be warned, Be warned, against Sin, when you see what *their Sin* has brought them to.

Especially, Let our *Young People* now take heed, that they do not slight the *warnings* of God. Methinks, I overhear the merciful God, saying over the *Young People* in this Place, *How shall I give them up!* And He therefore multiplies unto them those *warnings*, on which every one might Reasonably say, Surely, They will now fear God, and receive *Instruction*, that so they may not be cut off. Among those whom God has employ'd for the warning of the *Young People* in this Place, that they may be withheld from Sinning against Him, here is a poor Young man before you, that is just going to the Dead. God is this day holding up a *Young man* in Chains, that all the *Young People* of *New-England*,
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may take warning from him, and be withheld from Sinning against the God of their Fathers. When Asahel had been smitten by Abner, we read, 1 Sam. II. 23. *It came to pass, that as many as came to the Place where Asahel fell down and died, stood still.* Behold here a poor Young man smitten to Death; You are come to the place where a Young man falls down and dies, in the Violent pursuit of many Sins. Young men, won't you stand still at this Bleeding Spectacle; By a Young man thus Lying in his Blood, be withheld from going on any further in such Sins, as you now hear him with the Groans of a Deadly Wounded Man complaining of! He desires me, and it is a Token for Good upon him that he does so; To make use of his Tragical Example, for the saving of others, from such Sins, as have destroyed him, and Murdered him, and have at last brought him unto the Death of a Murderer. I am to tell you, what are the Things that Ly Heavy upon him; and he is the more willing to have

have them told, because he hopes, a merciful Saviour who has called such *Heavy-Laden* Sinners unto Him, has taken off the *heavy Loads* : The sad causes of *Heaviness*.

First ; His Disregard unto *Parental Instructions* ; This Troubles Him. He was bred in a Family, that had in it the *Exercises of Piety*, and he was there Instructed in his *Catechism*. These Early means of Good, had no Impression on him : And so he proves one, whose Father has no Joy. [*Good God, comfort thou and support his Distressed Father, when the Tidings of this Day arrive unto him.*] The Trouble for such *unfruitfulness* makes now a great Impression on him. We read of some who had been well counselled by their Father, but proved vitious Young men : I pray, what came they to ? We read, 1 *Sam.* II. 25. *They hearkned not unto the voice of their Father, because the Lord would slay them.* Children, Harken to this, Your Parents give you their counsils, To *Converse much with the word of God*,
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and, To uphold the Religion of the Closet,
and, To shun Wicked Company. Won't
you *Hearken* to them? Tis because the
Great God has a dreadful Thing to do
upon you. You now make nothing of
Troubling your Parents. Be assured,
God will *Trouble* you for your Impiety.
And when you are in your *Troubles*,
your outcry will be, *How have I not ob-*
ey'd the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined
my Ear to them that instructed me! It is
a Thing, which I wish you would more
think upon; Very few come to the
Gallowes, but what make that outcry
there; *My undutiful carriage to my Pa-*
rents, has Laid the Foundation of all the
Confusion that is come upon me! And the
more of a Religious Education the Chil-
dren have had, the more it may be ex-
pected, that the Holy God will appear
as a *swift Witness* against them, if they
do not answer it. I suppose there are
many Young men, who have been more
Extravagant and *Rebellious Prodigals*,
than this *Young man*; who yet has been
Bad enough. But no doubt, his Edu-
cation,

cation, This has hastened the Judgments of God upon him, has Ripened him for the Judgments of God. Children of a Good Education, If you do Wickedly, the Judgments of God, will cut you off, more fearfully, and speedily, than any in the World.

There is another thing, that this Young man very much lyes to Heart ; that is, Ungoverned passion, Inordinate passion : This at last, brought a Stabbing Fury upon him ; You see what it has cost him. The Discretion of a man, will defer, and abate and allay his Anger. Cholerick People, will be Indiscreet ; cannot but often speak and act very Indiscreetly. Passion will betray the wisest Men, into inexcusable Folly. They are first Blind, then Mad, that are under the furious conduct of it. A Moses himself in a Passion, will break both Tables of the Law. If the Angry Children of Dan will not run upon me, I would advise them; When you find a fit of Anger come upon you, presently think, There will nothing be so well

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spoke or done in *Anger*, but what would be much better out of it. Presently think, *The Wrath of Man won't work the Righteousness of God.* Utter not a word, until you have lift up your Hearts to God; *O my God, let me have the Meekness of Wisdom now adorning of me!* Unbridled *Anger*, will certainly hurry you on to Things, that must be Repented of. I must Entreat you particularly to beware of *Rash Words* in your passion; God hears them; & those words may return in *Wounds* upon you, which you little think of. This Young man who now stands before you, too often, & very rashly in his former *vain Conversation* used that Expression, *I'll be hang'd if --- not so and so.* 'Tis impossible for him to Express the pain of Soul with which he now looks Back upon it. I will go on to tell you, If there be *Hatred*, if there be *Malice*, in-venoming of your *Anger*; if you really wish *Ill* to them that you are *Angry* with; I must say, *Cursed is the Anger*, for it is raging, it is *Hellish*, and the

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Wrath,

Wrath, for it is *Cruel*, it is *Devilish*. There is a *Murder* in it: It is a *Murder* in the Egg of the *Cockatrice*. It will render a Man, that *Murderer* whom *Eternal Life* does not belong unto.

The Young man mourns for another Thing, which too often breaks out, as the *smoke of the Bottomless Pitt*, from a *Soul* raging in his *Folly*. Tis this; *Because of Swearing* his *Heart* mourns: The *profane Swearing* and *Cursing*, wherewith sometimes he struck at the *Glorious & Fearful Name of GOD*. This now recoils upon himself; Tis a *Dagger* at his *Heart*, now *God* has made his *Plagues Wonderful*. A most *Senseless Iniquity*! All the *sense* of it, is, to declare, an *open Defiance* of *GOD*. The *Transgression* of the *Wicked Swearer*, serves only to declare, That there is no *Fear* of *God* before his *Eyes*. The *Great GOD*, who is the *Creator*, and *Preserver*, and *Governour* of the whole *World*, of all *Worlds*; and on whom we all have our continual *Dependence* for every thing;

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thing; For an insolent worm, to count it a Decency, and a Bravery, in him, to cast Contempt on this Almighty GOD! A Senseless Villian, that has nothing to plead for this outrage of Wickedness! There can be neither pleasure nor profit in it. It is a Daughter of the Devil disposed without any Domy Christians, we have too Light Thoughts of it. If the Fear and Love of GOD had not very much left the World, the Fine for this Crime would be much greater than it is, and it would be more Zealously Executed; and they that are in it, would be so Vile to us, that we should even disdain to look upon them. A famous King in France punished Blasphemers by Searing the Lips of the Blasphemers with an hot Iron. It was Executed on a rich Citizen in Paris, for which they cried out upon him as a Tyrant; which when he heard of, he made this Reply; I would to God, that with Seiring my own Lips, I could banish all Blasphemer, and all Wicked Oathes, out of my Kingdom. It will sig-

nise Little, for any of your Ministers to say, We could be content never to speak any more, if that would purchase a Silence for that Hellish Language that is often heard among us. But this I will say, A Tongue bored with an hot Iron, would be a less Evil than a Tongue so set on Fire of Hell. Whither are you Travelling, O you that have learn'd the Language of Fiends; It cannot but be down to the Torment of Fiends: A Torment where such a Tongue will be gnaw'd for Pain, and a Drop of water to Ease the Scorches of it, will in vain be roared for. I bring that passage of the Divine Oracles, *What Man is he who desireth Life, & Love h many Days? Keep thy Tongue from Evil.* Alas! I bring it with a Lively Commentary; I must say, with a Deadly Commentary!

There is yet another Introduction to all mischief, which this Young Man does now in *suber sadness* bestow his Tears upon. I cannot hear that he was a Common Drunkard; but if he had not been somewhat in Drink, at the

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Time of it, (which he had been, alas, at other times) it is probable he had never done the Fact for which he sees the cutting off of his Days, and is deprived of the Residue of his Years. Nor is he the only one, that has been Executed in this Place, for things done by them, when Strong Drink had Enraged them. Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Holy One, I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; That Lying proverb, A Drunken man gets no Harm. I thought, you had seen Harm enough to follow upon Drunkenness, in the Infamy, which it fixes upon them that wallow in it; Harm enough, in the waste of Substance that arises from such Beastly Living; Harm enough in the Diseases, in the Disasters, in the untimely Deaths which it Leads unto. And, what? No Harm in the Wounds which the Slaves of the Bottle bring upon all the Faculties of their Souls? Truly, tis a very great Significancy, which I find in the Language of *Ji-*

doustan ; Tis a copious Language, and yet it uses but one word for *A Drunkard*, and *A Madman*. But if this be not enough, certainly, to be brought to the *Gallows* is *Harm* enough. O Lovers of *Strong Drink*, There is *Death* in that *Pott*, that *Cup*, with which you are intoxicated. Never give over crying to God, until he has delivered you, from the Vice, which thus *drowns* you in *Perdition*.

But I am informed of one thing, which will perfectly Shock every *Sober Christian* that shall hear of such a thing. I remember our *Tertullian*, in his *Apologitick* relates, how severe the Ancient Romans were, against their *Women*, if any of *Them* were found hankering after *Strong drink*. I suppose, he took his Relation out of *Pliny*. And indeed *he*, and *Cicero*, and some other *Roman Writers*, report such severities used on that occasion, that I do not care to mention them, lest abused *Husbands* under their irritations take too much Advantage of it. So much I will say ;

say ; *Drunkennes* in a *Woman*, was as Criminal among them as *Adultery*. But now, it is said ; That there are *Women* in this Place who are no Strangers to the Sin, and Trade of *Excessive Drinking*. The *Town* has had cause to know the Truth of this ; Ah ! Miserable Women ; The *Blemish* of their Sex ; And such as the Countrey may call, as one did his Daughter, the *Ulcers* of it ! I can tell the Name of a Pious Woman, who was unjustly suspected of being in Drink. That Handmaid of the Lord, in her Vindication cried out, *No, I should be a Daughter of Beliel, if I should be guilty of such a thing*. To them who cannot so well Vindicate themselves as *Hannah* could, I will say ; *How long wilt thou be drunken ? Put away thy Strong Drink from thee !* If thou art a *Woman of a sorrowful Spirit*, instead of pouring in *Strong Drink*, Oh ! Much rather, *pour out thy Soul unto the Lord*.

I think, the Young man is willing, that I should from him also tell you, That when a Man comes to Dye, the
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Sins of *Unchastity*, will be Felt as more bitter than *Death* unto him. One of old who had Experience enough, Pronounced them so. I can at this Hour show you another, who does it. Sins they are, that leave Curled Stings behind them. There is one thing which I have more than once or twice observed; and I have heard that the famous Mr. Perkins, also, who dealt much with Condemned Prisoners, observed in *Adultery* was Capital in the old Law of *Israel*, and is so at this Day in the Law of some other Nations. 'Tis not so in our Law; yea, This Adulterous Generation makes a Trifle of it. But very many of them who come to a Capital Execution for other things, cry out, God has set my secret *Adulteries* in the Light of His Countenance; my Secret *Adulteries*, I see God has known them, and been a Witness of them. O you that pursue any Unlawfull Amours, Give over; God will Judge you, if you go on any further in them. Let the Harlots of this

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Place also be afraid, and fearfulness surprize the Lewd Women of the Town; The Houses where some of them dwell, are too well known; Brutish Ones, You are going to dwell with a Devouring Fire, with Everlasting Burnings.

One thing more: My poor Young man does Lament the Temptations, & the Wretchednesses of the Sea-faring Life exceedingly. He ran to Sea Ten years ago, when he was about fourteen Years of Age, without and against the mind of his Father; Tho' he has been since Reconciled unto his Father, yet he has found the Ill Effects of so leaving him. The Sea, that ever that Element should be so poisoning, so polluting! Truly, Our Sea-faring Tribe, do call for a most extraordinary Concern and Pity from us!

You, Our Brothers, are under many Obligations to be the Best of men. But I hear that you are much otherwise, & I partly believe it. Yea, It is commonly Reported, That the Sailours are sensibly degenerated in the Last Ten or a dozen

dozen years; Tho' God knows, there was Little Reason for their *Degeneracy*. Ah, What shall we Do for you? We Love you, We Value you, we Rejoice in you, we Pray for you, we wish you well, our Souls are Travailing for your Welfare. We long to see your *Vessels* a sort of Little Churches for the Worship of God practised in them, and for the Abhorrence & Avoidance of every Wicked Thing aboard. We Long, we Long, to have it said of our *Mariners*, The Men fear the Lord exceedingly. Others have given you many Solemn Calls, to Repent, and Return, and become a Generation that may comfortably look for the Blessings of God. Behold, One of your own Tribe, in his Fetters here calling upon you; Oh! Take warning by me. Live Religiously; Ly no longer in the Gall of Bitterness, and Bond of Iniquity! God grant, that these Calls may not be Lost upon you. Few of you Live to be Old; some of you Dy in your Sins, and for your Sins, and very miserable

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ferable. Oh ! That you, yea, and all this Auditory, would now come to this Conclusion; *Lord, I have thought on my wayes, and I have turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies.*

But the vast Body of Young People in this Auditory, and throughout the Country, are those who are once again, to be moved with Fear in hearing the Tremendous Warnings of God. God has here taken another YOUNG-MAN & Exhibited him for all the Young People in the Countrey to tremble at the Spectacle. Herein, Lo, God sends out His Voice, and that a mighty Voice! The Youth also from his Chains, does utter his Cries; Oh ! Look on me, Young People, and Learn of me, what will become of you, if you so disoblige the Glorious God, that He shall not withhold you from Sinning against Him ! That so many of our Young People, after all the Warnings, which the Great God has given unto them, continue still Unconverted unto God, and Serious Piety, and Go on still in their Trespases by which they bespeak

bespeak the *Wounds* of His Irritated Wrath; Tis, a *Lamentation*, & it will be for a *Lamentation*. There are Multitudes of *Young People*, who remain Strangers unto *Conversion* to their Saviour, and unto the *Religion of the Closet*, wherewith a True Conversion always begins, and is for ever accompanied. And there are some who abandon themselves unto the most abominable Courses, in which they fortify themselves by the Force of *Evil Company*. I am verily perswaded, There is an *Oracle* of the Great God, which many of our *Young People* are very deeply concerned in. Harken to it, O Children of Incurable Folly; Harken to what is from the *Sacred Place of Thunder* to be now uttered among you; Hear attentively the Noise of the Voice of God, and the Sound that goes out of His mouth; and Let your Hearts also tremble at it. It is that; Prov. XXIX. 1. *He that being often re-proved, hardeneth his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy.*

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I am afraid, I am afraid, I am afraid, That before many Months are Expired an offend-
ed God, will no longer Extend His *Abused*
Patience, but single out some *Young people*, to
accomplish this terrible word upon them.
How happy would it be, for some of our
Young people, if an *Hand of Heaven* would
condescend so far, as to appear unto them,
and *Write* that Sentence on the *Wall* before
their Eyes ! It were well if it could be seen
written on the *Walls* of those *Houses*, I will
say, those *Pest-Houses*, where they resort, for
Gaming, and for Drinking, or for Baudy
Entertainments, and all the purposes of *Evil*
Company. But, whether the Sentence be on
those *Walls* or no, it stands *Written by the*
Hand of Heaven in the *Book of God*. Me-
thinks, it should make your looks *Change*, your
Thoughts to *Trouble* you, and your *Knees* to
smite one against another. For it will be fear-
fully accomplished ! It is a remarkable pas-
sage ; Heb. VI. 8. *The Earth which bears*
Thorns and Briars, is *nigh unto Cursing*, its *End*
is to be Burned : That is to say, The End of
the *Briars and Thorns* that grow upon it : The
Children of *Belial*, whereof *David* long ago
said, *They shall utterly be consumed with Fire*.
Mark what I say ; *New-England* is a *Field of*
God. Many Good, Rich, sweet Fruits have
grown in this Field ; and being bound up in
the *Bundle of Life* are Transplanted unto the
Celestial Paradise. O Children of *New-Eng-*
land, If you prove *Degenerate Things* ; *Briars*,
and *Thorns*, and *Lothsome Weeds*, and hurtful

Tares in this Field; you are *Nigh unto Cursing*; The *Curse* is not yet Executed on you; God waits one year after another, to see what you will prove. But the Execution of the *Curse*, it is *Nigh*, it is *Nigh*, to you; The *Day* is near, it is near, and it hastens Greatly. God will make a *Quick Work* of it. It won't be long before you are thrown into the *Fires* for which the *Tares* are to be burned. An *Endless Fire* will be the *End* of such *Briars* and *Thorns*; and the *End* is very *Nigh* to them, when their secure Souls do least of all imagine it, and put far away the *Evil Day*. O Children of *New-England*, Be a fraid of coming to such an *End*.

The *first Counsil* to you, must be that, which if you take it not, no *Good Counsil* will take any place upon you. Tis, *Forfake the Foolish and Live*. Tis, *Do not sit with vain Persons*. Tis, *Break off your Familiarity with such wicked Creatures*, as you may perceive by their *Shibboleths*, their *Mocking at Religion*, their *Scoffing and Railing at the Ministers of God*, their not *bridling of their Tongue*, to be the *Children of Wickedness*. It was an Imperial Sentence, *Malas consociationes putamus proximas esse Criminibus*; Evil *Companions* will soon bring Men to *Evil Practices*. Oh! Take your leave of them, in those Terms; *Psal. CXIX.*

115. *Depart from me, ye Evil Doers*; for I will keep the *Commandments of my God*. A Person of *Quality*, who Ended his Days at the *Gallows on Tower-hill*, used those *Pathetical words*; If I had hearkened unto the *Hundred and*

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nineteenth Psalm, and the Hundred and fifteenth Verse, I had never come to this. That I will say to you, If you will not hearken unto the Hundred and nineteenth Psalm, and the Hundred and fifteenth Verse, no man can say, what you will come to : To no Good, you may be sure of it. But if this point be gain'd, Then I hope, you will go on to Embrace your only Saviour, and study His Beauties & obey His Commands, and say unto Him, O Lord, I am thy Servant : I am thine, Save me. I hope, I leave you all, in the Frame that you find Exemplified ; Psal. CXIX. 57. Thou art my Portion, O Lord, I have said, That I would keep thy Words.

But unto you, O poor Young man, who are now to Dye in Youth, because your Life has been among the Unclean ; and to Dye before your Time, for having been especially in one point, Wicked overmuch, all that now remains for me to add, after all the many Instructions which the Servants of God have bestow'd upon you, is this. Tho' your Sins are what they have been, yet Return unto me, saith the Lord. - You are a Prisoner of Hope, to find Mercy with that God, who says to the Returning Sinner, I will have Mercy, and I will abundantly Pardon. In the Proverbs of Israel, [Chap. XXXI. 6.] We read about, Giving Wine to them that are of heavy Hearts, because ready to perish. Accordingly among the Jews, there was that which they gave unto Criminals going to be Executed. It may be called by Amos, The Wine of the Condemned ; and some think, it is what is called by David,

64 *Restraints Merciful, &c.*

The Wine of Astonishment. Poor Man, I am not going to bring unto thee, a potion to *Stupify* thy Senses; No, I give thee the most Solemn Caution in the World; *Awake, Awake,* O Soul on the Brink of Eternity: And be afraid of nothing so much as a *Stupified Soul*; be afraid of nothing so much, as lest a *Spirit of Slumber* seize upon thee, after the *Serpent* has bitten thee, and lest a *Deceived Heart* in thee take up with a *Defective Repentance*. But I bring thee a Cordial of that *Wine*, which, O Soul ready to *perish*, thy *Heavy Heart* may justly esteem above a thousand Worlds. I have known a poor Malefactor, here Executed for a Murder, but with some *hopeful Appearance of Repentance* in him, utter that word, for his last, and what he chose to *Dye* withal; A word that I now leave with you, for you in your *Dying Moments* to Live upon; *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all Acceptation; That Christ Jesus came into the World, to Save Sinners; of whom I am Chief.*

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